Increasing Production

Reg. No. B3092

# HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

VOL. XI, No. 14 AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MAY 4, 1947 TWO ANNAS

## GANDHIJI'S BIHAR TOUR DIARY

*14-4-'47*

In the course of his post-prayer speech at Bankipur *maidan* this evening Gandhiji said that he had heard disquieting news from Noakhali. Satis Babu and also Haran Babu had both informed him about the rapidly deteriorating situation, giving facts and figures. If what he had heard proved to be true, he might have to fast, since by going to Bihar while his work in Noakhali was still unfinished he had earned the right of fasting against misdeeds in Noakhali. That did not, however, mean that fasting was a certainty. He, however, felt bound to hint at the possibility.

Gandhiji also referred to his talks with the Viceroy at Delhi and said that both in public and private conversations the Viceroy declared that he was going to be the last Viceroy of India, and that also only up to June 30, 1948.

Gandhiji felt that the Viceroy was honest in his profession. The British were already preparing for transfer of power. Gandhiji felt that he realized that the transfer of power must be peaceful if Britain was to escape the charge that during her reign of more than a century she had brought up nothing but fight among ourselves. It was a sad sight that while freedom was almost within their grasp they were fighting among themselves. All the important members of the Congress, whether in the Interim Government or outside it, were trying their best to grasp freedom and to establish peace in the country, freeing it from at least the major portion of the evils of the old order.

*15-4-'47*

After the prayer Gandhiji said that while he was in Delhi he received letters from Bihar, some couched in thoughtless language, some in the language of praise and a few expressing doubt if he was ever returning to Bihar to finish his work. The last needed no reply. Praise was wholly unnecessary for one doing one's duty as he was doing his. He, however, singled out one letter which he thought was based on pure ignorance. It doubted the wisdom of the speaker leaving his work in Noakhali and coming to Bihar at the instance of Dr. Syed Mahmud and daring to accept his hospitality.

The critic forgot that Dr. Mahmud was Gandhiji's friend and that he had known Dr. Mahmud's father-in-law before he knew the late Brij Kishore Prasad of revered memory or Dr. Rajendra Prasad. In his opinion Dr. Mahmud had rendered a service to the Hindus and the Muslims of Bihar by bringing him to Bihar. For, if Bihar remained sane in the midst of possible madness throughout India, Bihar would raise India in the estimation of the world and leave to the world a singular example of sanity in the midst of surrounding insanity. This he had a right to expect by right of service and more so because the Bihar Hindus, however illiterate they might be, were votaries of Rama, the incarnation of all the good in the world. Although evil seemed at times to rule the world, the eternal truth was that the world lived so long as goodness resided even in one person. Evil was naught. If Bihar remained good in the midst of temptation, it was well with it, and well with the whole of India.

The insinuation that there was a sinister motive behind drawing him away from Noakhali, namely that the Noakhali Muslims might be free from his (Gandhiji's) restraining influence, wast oo flimsy to bear examination. For, if he succeeded wholly in Bihar, itw as impossible for very shame that the Noakhali Muslims hould go mad.

At the end Gandhiji announced that the heat was too great for him to stand the strain of motoring extensively and working the whole day. He found it necessary to have frequent intervals of rest if he was to go through a fair amount of work. And he had ample to do in Patna. Incidentally he mentioned that he would try each evening to cover important points of interest to the public.

*16-4-'47*

Gandhiji referred to a statement which he had signed at the suggestion of the Viceroy while he was in Delhi. The act had the consent of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other members of the Working Committee. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had also signed it. The terms of the document were:

"We deeply deplore the recent acts of lawlessness and violence that have brought the utmost disgrace on the fair name of India and greatest misery to innocent people, irrespective of who were the aggressors and who were the victims.

"We denounce for all time the use of force to achieve political ends, and we call upon all the communities of India, to whatever persuasion they may belong, not only to refrain from all acts of violence and disorder, but also to avoid both in speech and writing, any word which might be construed as an incitement to such acts."

So far as his signature was concerned it had no value for he had never believed in violence. But it was significant that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had signed it. If the spirit of the appeal was adhered to by the signatories, and there was no reason why it

should not be, they could hope that all the trouble and bloodshed would cease. It might be that they would now enable him to leave Bihar and do other work.

They might well ask why his signature was taken and not of the members of the Working Committee or of the Congress President. He could not go into the matter. He confessed that he represented nobody but himself. Nevertheless, the signatures laid a heavy responsibility on both of them. He had not signed the appeal only on behalf of any one community. It meant assuming responsibility for all communities. He claimed that all religions were equal. A similar claim could be advanced on the Qaid-e-Azam's behalf since the appeal was issued not only to one community but to all the communities. And there was a time when Jinnah Saheb had a high position in the Congress.

The Viceroy should be congratulated on bringing about the unique document. No doubt it would have been better if such a document had been signed as between the Congress and the League without any outsider's intervention. He hoped, however, that there would now be cooperation between the two bodies.

*17-4-'47*

At the prayer meeting today Gandhiji drew attention to the fact that for the sake of the Muslim friends who wished to join the prayers — and the day had grown longer — the prayer time was advanced by fifteen minutes. He also warned those who were inclined to laugh at the selections from the *Quran* and other scriptures against the practice. They ought to cultivate the same regard for other religions that they had for their own. Not to do so was to belittle one's own faith and expose it to attacks from without.

After the prayer he referred to the visits he had from Muslim friends who complained to him that in and about Bihar Sharif and Monghyr things were not quite favourable to the return of the refugees. If the information was correct, he was very sorry. The heat was so oppressive that he had not the heart to undertake arduous travelling during the hot weather but he would have no other recourse if the Hindus in those places had not the spirit of repentance and did not resume their friendliness towards their Muslim neighbours, no matter how few they were. It was suggested to him that arms should be issued to the Muslims who were in fear of their Hindu neighbours. Those who made such suggestions did not know him. He would not issue any license to the Muslims or to the Hindus for the purpose of self-defence. It was a sign of barbarity. He would even take away the arms from those who had them already. Their arms were a living faith in God and a stout heart born of that faith.

He had also a visit from the *zamindars* who, among other things, had complained of growing lawlessness among the peasantry and labour. He deplored the fact. It was a blot on the fair name of Bihar. Such lawlessness was criminal and was bound to involve the very peasantry and labour in ruin, let alone the *zamindars* who were after all a mere handful. He fervently hoped that the lesson of the past thirty years in the virtue of non-violence would not be lost upon the people of Bihar. He was quite prepared to say for the sake of argument that the *zamindars* were guilty of many crimes and of omissions and commissions. But that was no reason for the peasant and the labourer who were the salt of the earth to copy crime. If salt lost its savour wherewith could it be salted ?

*18-4-'47*

Gandhiji said in his post-prayer speech that he was told that he had done an injustice to the peasants and the labourers in his remarks of the previous evening. He was further told that it was the *zamindars* who continued the old coercive policy. Wherever the truth lay, his remarks were based on the assumption that what he was told was true. The *kisans* had a rich experience of non-violent *satyagraha* when their amazing restraint brought about the end of a century-old wrong in the shape of the indigo grievance and planters' *raj* in Champaran. He hoped they would not forget the lesson of that rich experience.

To the landlords he said that if what was said against them was true, he would warn them that their days were numbered. They could no longer continue as lords and masters. They had a bright future if they became the trustees of the poor *kisans*. He had in mind not trustees in name but in reality. Such trustees would take nothing for themselves that their labour and care did not entitle them to. Then they would find that no law would be able to touch them. The *kisans* would be their friends.

He next referred to the complaint he had received about a punitive tax that was levied. He felt that the State had no other alternative if the people would not give up the criminals. Nor could the State carry out mass arrests where hundreds and thousands were involved in shameful crimes. Punitive tax was then the only remedy. The only way by which the people could render the punitive tax unnecessary was to repent and undo the wrong done by voluntary labour and contributions. They should also approach the injured Muslims and request them to go back to their homes. They should assure them that they would regard them as their dear ones.

*19-4-'47*

After the usual prayers Gandhiji in his remarks referred to two letters he had received: one from the Punjab from a lady known to him and the other a very well written letter from a Bihari who had chosen not to give his address and probably had given an assumed name. Both were friendly letters but written in anger. They had lost faith in *ahimsa* and practically advised retirement and save the speaker's good name which he had earned by his service. These friends did not know the virtue of *ahimsa*. His dream was not that some persons, the soldiers and the police, should save their honour, but every man and woman should

be the custodian of his or her own honour. This was possible only under the rule of *ahimsa* and no other. He was never tired of repeating that the highest form of bravery was to be expressed through *ahimsa*. The people of Bihar had before them the example of the *ahimsa* of the indigo-growing peasants of Champaran who were able to bring to an end a century old wrong.

Gandhiji then dealt with *khadi*. He said that during the next four or five days he would be having meetings of the All India Spinners' Association and the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. He was not, therefore, going to see local people in connection with the Bihar disturbances. He would have to talk to them of *khadi* which above all was responsible for an India-wide activity in the villages of India. He made bold to say that without the constructive activity of which *khadi* or the *charkha* was the centre, the awakening of the villages would not have been possible. He reminded the audience how under the late Jamnalalji's inspiration an All India Khadi Board was established during his incarceration and how it was turned into the All India Spinners' Association with an autonomous charter from the Congress and how it had distributed several crores of rupees among men and women of India's numerous villages. *Khadi* had easily become the symbol of non-violence. The truth of *khadi* had been so firmly fixed in their minds that the spinning wheel had found a place on the much-prized tri-colour flag. *Khadi* had been happily described by Pandit Nehru as the livery of India's freedom. Though as an article of clothing it belonged as well to the harlot as to the chaste woman, for the nation its association was undoubtedly with the pure and the non-violent. If therefore *khadi* had not found an abiding place in all the villages of India, as the President of the Association he had no hesitation in accepting the blame on behalf of himself and his fellow trustees. Their devotion to the cause was not as full as it should have been, their knowledge of the science of *khadi*, its technique, was not as deep as it should have been, nor were the *tapashcharya* and sacrifice adequate to the occasion. Therefore, whilst much was done much more was still to be done before *khadi* could take its supreme place in the foundation of Swaraj to be.

*20-4-'47*

After the prayers Gandhiji reverted to the subject of *khadi* and announced that the Charkha Sangh had acceded to the proposal of Shri Laxmi Babu and his colleagues that they should be wholly independent of the material support of the Sangh while keeping its purely moral authority. Gandhiji said that if he was the Prime Minister of Bihar and had to select the members of his Government, the latter would stop all new mills and would expect those already established in Bihar to sell all their manufactures at controlled rates outside India and thus gain for Bihar the estimation of the world for generosity. For, there was shortage of cloth everywhere in the world. He would prevent with the consent of people the sale of mill-cloth in Bihar. Fortunately or unfortunately for Bihar he was not its Prime Minister. Nevertheless, such was the ambition of the Charkha Sangh in acceding to Laxmi Babu's proposal. The expectation was that Laxmi Babu and his colleagues by reason of their independence of the Sangh could be better able to push forth their *khadi* programme and make it so popular that Bihar would become wholly independent of mill-cloth. He held that this was quite possible if the people of Bihar gave their whole-hearted cooperation. The villages of Bihar would hum with the soothing music of the *charkha* and the loom. They would bring vitality to the villages of Bihar. *Khadi* would cease to be an article of commerce. The cities like Patna would also be manufacturing their own *khadi*. The children of the schools and the students of the colleges would gladly and religiously set apart a certain portion of their time daily for this very necessary constructive work. The city women would equally be expected to do no less. With diligence and will, they would become self-supporting in the matter of *khadi*. Then and then only would *khadi* find its natural place in the economy of the nation. The drudgery of the mill would give place to the joy of creation in their homes and schools. Gandhiji drew attention to the fact that whereas the mills needed to import machinery and even skill, to an extent, from outside, all the parts required for the *charkha* and the loom and the required skill were to be found in their villages. He wished, therefore, that the new experiment would find favour with the people of Bihar. It was in that hope that Laxmi Babu and his co-workers had approached their labour of love.

## STORY HOUR

*( Continued from Vol XI, No. 9, Page 103 )*

[ The following is from Samuel Smiles' *Character* ( John Murray ). —V. G. D. ]

XII

"In those days the lands were tilled by the hands even of generals, the soil exulting beneath a plough-share crowned with laurels, and guided by a husbandman graced with triumphs.

Pliny's *Natural History*

XIII

In the course of a coversation with Madame Campan, Napoleon remarked: "The old systems of instruction seem to be worth nothing; what is yet wanting in order that the people should be properly educated?" "MOTHERS", replied Madame Campan. The reply struck the Emperor, "Yes," said he, "here is a system of education in one word. Be it your care, then, to train up mothers who shall know how to educate their children."

AIME' MARTIN

XIV

Once at St. Helena, when walking with Mrs. Balcombe, some servants came along carrying a load. The lady in an angry tone ordered them out of the way, on which Napoleon interposed, saying, "Respect the burden, madame".

HARIJAN

May 4 1947

## INCREASING PRODUCTION

The keynote of the Presidential speech of Seth B. L. Jalan at the Marwari Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, is 'increasing production' and 'improving the standard of living of the masses in the country'. These two phrases are being bandied about at every convenient occasion. They were largely in evidence in Pandit Jawaharlal's speech also at the Manufacturers' Association meeting recently. But what these phrases mean is hardly ever defined. These words are, therefore, little more than slogans to capture the imagination of the unwary and to convince the unthinking public which is generally carried away by much talking.

In a country where people are starving and where there is not enough cloth to go round, these phrases should carry the meaning of providing at least the mere necessities of the people—food and clothing. Our effort should, therefore, be directed towards giving two meals a day where one cannot be obtained today. And our effort should be to enable the people to be clad at least against the weather if not to satisfy their aesthetic sense.

Seth Jalan appears to be more concerned with developing his industries than with the needs of the people, for he goes on to say, 'if India is to develop her industries on a permanent footing, the Government must follow a policy of export drive even though we might have to suffer some privation for some time,' and he states that his firm conviction is that the industrial development of India cannot be put on a sound footing unless the products of Indian industries are exported abroad. He recommends our Government to base their 'proposals on the principles of an expansionist policy of production advocated by Lord Keynes, — 'the more you eat of the cake the larger it becomes.' He believes that the social objectives of the Finance Member can be fulfilled only by such a policy. We are glad that he has confessed openly Lord Keynes to be his *guru*. And the hope that 'the more you eat of the cake the larger it becomes' however absurd it may seem to the common sense of us ordinary mortals, it can easily be made feasible by these demi-gods who eat the cake no doubt, but the cake is not theirs but others'. Herein lies the secret of this apparent miracle. Of course if they merely ate other people's cake, their own cake ought to remain constant. But the method of doing this is generally to bite off from the other people's cake a larger piece than you can eat. That of course makes their cake grow larger.

### PRODUCTION OR DESTRUCTION?

In a previous article we had pointed out that the methods adopted by the recent types of large-scale industries have been anything but progressive. And also we had shown instances to indicate how they were using Science to destroy rather than create. This being so, it would be well to examine the proposition: how to increase production? When we, with the help of rice mills, produce unwholesome polished rice, can we call it increasing production? Is it not destruction of the production of the paddy by the farmer? Similarly, when sugar mills produce white sugar from sugar-cane juice and thus provide a less nutritive product, and perhaps, devitalize the wholesome juice of the sugar-cane, again would we be using the term 'increasing production' correctly? Is this also not an instance of destruction of nature's gifts? There can be an increase in production over what is found in nature if man's efforts result in an increase not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. When a farmer sows a seed and reaps a hundredfold because of his effort, we are justified in saying that the farmer has increased production. But when we look around at most of the efforts of the mill owners and measure their output and compare it with nature's generous gifts we can only say that the machines have been utilized by man for destruction rather than production, much less for increased production.

### SHIFTING CROPS

In Bihar and in large sections of the U. P. thousands of acres have been brought under cultivation of sugar-cane. Formerly these lands were not waste lands. If they had been waste lands and the sugar-cane was an addition to the general production, we would be justified in calling it an increase of production. Before the advent of sugar-cane cultivation Biharis used their lands for rice cultivation and consumed hand pounded wholesome rice; but now the crops have been shifted with the result that they cultivate sugar-cane and are dependent on Burma for their rice. And Burmese rice comes polished — that means all the nutrition is removed as in pure starch. However much the sugar-cane crop may have been increasing the bank balances of the mill owners, can we, by any stretch of imagination, lay claim to having increased production when we drive the masses of people from the nutritive rice of their own cultivation to devitalized polished rice imported from outside? This shifting of crops from food to raw materials for mills is not only a disservice to the country but is injurious to the health of the people. It is not "increasing production" when we are shifting the crops from food to long staple cotton for the mills and tobacco and groundnut for export. At best it can be said to be pilfering and not production. This is the kind of increase that has been taking place in the country and which has led to considerable distress to the people in meeting their primary needs.

In the same way, in Malabar the former rice lands have been converted into cocoanut groves and these cocoanut groves are producing cocoanuts not for human consumption but for oil for soap mills. Is producing *Lux* soap in however large a quantity, an increase of production when this is done at the cost of the people's staple food? The people who were formerly cultivating rice are at present being given polished rice imported from

Brazil. Hence in the final analysis the mill owners' efforts have resulted in the provision of Brazilian polished rice to the people who were once eating wholesome unpolished rice of their own production and converted those rice lands into producing raw material for soap-making. Is this increased production? And is this striving to raise the standard of living of the masses? We can well see that the mill owners have eaten some cake and at the same time the stock of the cake has increased. But what is the state of the common people?

When crops have been shifted deliberately from the production of staple food to raw materials for luxury goods is it any wonder that the country is facing famine after famine? If we really strive for greater production, our endeavours should have by now brought us to a more satisfactory supply of our primary needs. But when we look around we find confirmation of the observation of Seth Jalan that "the country today is suffering from the acutest shortage of food. It is an irony of fate that India which is primarily an agricultural country is now dependent upon imports of food stuffs to feed her population." Should we wonder at this stage? Seth Jalan has unconsciously confessed the truth. The fact cannot be belied and the deduction that our efforts, such as they have been, have resulted in decreased production cannot be missed.

STANDARD OF LIVING

In a country suffering from unemployment and underemployment even the method of production should be such as to solve this great problem. Methods we have adopted so far of "increasing production" have invariably led to increased unemployment. What is known in Western countries as labour-saving devices can be better expressed as labour-displacing devices, or in other words, devices for creating unemployment. In resorting to these large-scale methods of production, the millowners have adversely affected the standard of living of the masses. Our famines are becoming perennial even at times when nature's contributions have been generous. Is this not an indication that with all this much talk of increasing the standard of living, we are really lowering the standard of existence?

Pandit Jawaharlal expresses the hope that the "industrial progress and the prosperity of the 400 million people are inter-related, that he does not want any industrial development if the 400 million people are going to be in a bad way, and that progress must bring progress to all the people and not to a few chosen ones." "We have to think of it in terms of the masses of this country." We invite the attention of Panditji to the facts of the case for increased production that have been stated above, and we would like him to consider whether we can increase production of the type he envisages by centralized methods of production in consumption goods. Let him take stock of the increased distress that has come to our land in the wake of our efforts put out in that direction in the past.

We are all one with Panditji when he wants to advance the cause of the masses and strives for the progress of the country. But we would submit to him that this must be done scientifically, not merely to satisfy the greed for acquisition of wealth for a few. So far as we have seen, science has been harnessed not for production but for destruction. In the Interim Government the Finance Member the Hon'ble Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan has enunciated a sound proposition of social objectives and he has indicated to his colleagues how courage may be taken in both hands and how the cause of the masses of the people could be advanced. We trust this leadership will have its effect on the whole Government.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

## JETTISONING OF THE BALLAST

The Madras Government dropped their pilot Prakasam not so long ago. Now comes the news that the items on his programme are being abandoned one by one. We are sorry to note that the Minister for Agriculture is throwing overboard certain of the schemes to procure and distribute food stuffs under the plea that these schemes have not the full consent and willing cooperation of the people and it is also decided not to proceed with the Estates and Revenue Bill which declared that the *ryot* was the owner of the soil and not the *zamindar*. Again under some plea or the other the programme for the introduction of producer-cum-consumer cooperative societies for dealing in food grains and other essential village articles are being abandoned in favour of the middleman. All these steps appear to us as definitely retrogressive. It looks as though the vested interests are asserting themselves. Has the Madras Ministry no social objective but that of drifting before the vocally strong?

While the Madras Ministry is giving reasons why it should abandon multi-purpose cooperative societies, their colleague Dr. K. N. Katju of the U. P. Government is giving strong reasons why he should push on with the same scheme on a much wider scale in every village so as to concentrate attention on better farming, dairying, spinning of yarn, and marketing of the articles produced. It is a strange sight that the so-called Congress Governments should be pulling in different directions in the different provinces. Naturally we are justified in our conclusion that the branches are not receiving sap from the same trunk and whims and fancies and local influence seem to carry the day.

If we are to serve the masses, such service can only be in one direction and requires the cooperative efforts of all concerned. Hence, we hope that the newly formed Constructive Programme Committee of the A. I. C. C. will provide the needed coordination unit for all the different provincial ministries. We have difficult oceans to cross and storms to weather. The ship of State with the Congress at its helm cannot afford to lose its ballast at the very commencement if we do mean to weather the storm that seems to be lowering heavily over us from all directions. Let us, therefore, read the signs of the times and prepare ourselves as a team to work for the people of the land. In such a programme alone lies the strength and safety of the Congress.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

## ONE WORLD, ONE PROBLEM

Suffering unites the world in a queer way. It often tars the globe with one brush. Leprosy affords an illustration of this truth. All over the world there is the same neglect of the human needs of the leprosy patient and a superstitious dread of the disease. It is worth pondering why in a world of enlightenment and boasted progress, people should regard leprosy as they did thousands of years ago when the only surgeon known was the crude barber. Ignorance and prejudice perhaps account a great deal for the situation; but there is a deeper reason: man's failure in fellowship. The appeal of leprosy is essentially an appeal to the conscience of Man.

Below are given extracts from letters by correspondents living in countries where leprosy is a serious problem.

From Rizal, Philippines, writes Josephine Guerrero who, a patient herself, lives in the Novaliches Leprosarium "under the triple inspiration of great faith, great courage and great patriotism" trying to cheer up her less brave companions:

> "The inside story of the life of the leper in the poor and sadly abandoned leper colony is too full of heartaches, misery and want. First, I want you to know that I am happy to suffer in God's love, for what joy can be greater? It would not be human, however, to tell you that I am never otherwise; nor would it be true. There are moments of unspeakable loneliness, of unexplained longings and yearnings in which one's heart is tried to the core. But I feel that our Lord desires this strange hidden life for me for reasons I shall never know until He calls me Home. So I have made no oblation and only ask that He may give grace and strength enough to follow His will. But my companions are not so easily led like children; I fear many are grown bitter or despairing, futile, helpless, depraved and hateful. The rest are simply apathetic or cynically indifferent. I desire so much to alleviate all this human misery, and wish to be able at least to instil once more the feeling of hope, and to make their lives once more wholesome and bright."

After describing the miserable want prevailing in the colony, this brave heroine writes:

> "Medicine: even that is not adequate. We have no laboratories here; we have no sufficient medical help; in short, this is not a hospital, it is a prison and the patients are classed not better than the criminals. They say the government is poor, yet it has funds for everything else. Why? Is it because the world has conspired against the leper? Because once a leper, always a leper? But I am being furious for nothing perhaps. I suppose the lot of the leper is simply like this. Or is it? Or should it be? I want to do something about it. The administration thinks the leper is cursed, that he is hopeless. Is the leper utterly to be blamed if he has learned to take the law in his own hands, has become rebellious, covetous and even repulsive? Living here I have learned that perhaps the blame does not lie wholly on the leper himself. Most of us are completely abandoned even by our families; the rest of us have no family."

Beryl A. Clarke writes from Virgin Islands U. S. A.:

> "Out here leprosy seems to be taken for granted. A few people are put in the colony and not much done. On that account I am afraid there is little to tell about the work done here."

Louis A. Moreno from Cuba writes:

> "It is only in recent years that our problem has been seriously taken into consideration and the Government at present is attending to it. There are plans to build new dispensaries in other cities and large colonies in the central section of the Island. All this depends upon our Congress granting a special budget."

Joseph L. Hislop writes from Chacachare, Trinidad:

> "What I abhor most bitterly is the attitude adopted by the public towards the poor afflicted. Take a case in point where a young man was hounded down by a limb of the law and a doctor, as though he had committed some great crime and sent to the Leprosarium. He rallied with the disease and took treatment. He finally got paroled in three years. I say, this young man with a clean discharge certificate, duly signed by the leprologist as fit was no danger to the public. He went in search for work and got a job as an oiler on one of the Government-run trains. He did his work well and promotion came his way as fireman, until some one who knew that he was at one time a patient at the Leprosarium reported his case to the General Manager who in turn gave him a laid off ticket for an indefinite period. "Fired in smart"! He got another job and the same fate attended him. He again sought another, this time as a chauffeur to the manager of a theatre. He was doing well until some one again reported to the manager that he was at the leper settlement. When the boss heard that, he flew out of his car and asked the man to get out and paid him off on the spot, and in the haste of paying off this man two twenty dollar bills were mixed in the money. The man not wanting to be dishonest returned the overchange to the manager who refused it on the ground that he was a leper. The young man in his thirties could have stood the torture of the stigma no longer; he committed suicide by hanging himself in his room."

A. H. Pipe of Southern Rhodesia, Africa, writing of the resignation of Dr. B. Moiser O. B. E., writes:

> "He left us in mid-April last, after having served here for seventeen years as the sole medical officer, and for most of that time without any European nursing staff and assistance; it was only in his last year that he had the help of a trained nursing sister and also of a welfare sister. This shortage of staff, and lack of response to his continued requests for assistance, together with more adequate accommodation and equipment, were the main reasons for his tendering his resignation." "Dr. Moiser practised the idea of voluntary treatment, with as much freedom, as possible, and was opposed to any form of force or coercion, believing that compulsion always defeated its own object by driving the disease underground. He holds that nowhere in the world can the compulsory system be shown to have stamped out or even

appreciably decreased the incidence of the disease, whereas where voluntary segregation and treatment are encouraged many more cases will and do come forward. In his practice here, the Doctor actually kept the law in the background, having agreed on this point with the Medical Director of that time when he was appointed. In actual fact, there is an Ordinance for "Leprosy Suppression" which is still on the Statute Books of S. Rhodesia, and which, of course, was in force all the time the Doctor was here. But like many another law in this and most other countries, it was administered "benevolently", and was only there if required in exceptional circumstances. Unfortunately, since the Doctor's departure, it has been decided, apparently, to apply the principles of compulsory segregation to Southern Rhodesia, and the position here is now that patients are compelled to come here and to remain here if they are residents or citizens of the Colony. In this respect, the practice now conforms to that of the neighbouring Union.

"It must, however, be admitted that general living conditions here are still considerably better than those at Westfort Institution, near Pretoria. The few Europeans here still have each a separate house or cottage with their own garden, and each is self-contained, whilst the six hundred odd African patients are not herded within barbed-wire, prison-like compounds, as is the case at Pretoria. Admittedly, the native compounds here are old and have served their time and purpose, and require to be replaced by more modern dwellings, but this is a question of a long-term development policy for the Health Department to tackle, when material and labour can be found. The present native quarters consist of six compounds, or large villages, comprising "kimberly" (unburnt) brick and thatched huts, nominally for two patients, but actually, in many cases, owing to present lack of accommodation, having to house as many as four, and in one or two extreme cases, five."

Letters from abroad also speak of new sulphone drugs which promise to give better results than *chaulmoogra* oil. They write enthusiastically of "Hope for the almost hopeless", "Hope reborn" etc. But even a specific cannot alleviate the human misery caused by leprosy if ignorance and fear were not abolished, and if neglect of the leprosy patient was not replaced by intelligent human care. At present it is estimated that only less than five per cent of the world's leprosy patients get any reasonable care and medical treatment. If 95% of the patients do not yet get even the *chaulmoogra* oil, new drugs which are costly and demand administration under controlled conditions will continue for long to be of academic rather than of practical interest, especially in a country like India where the dumb millions of villagers are left without any medical care. Why talk of drugs and treatment if you can't take them to the poor man? And as Perry Burgess, the President of the American Leprosy Foundation asks, "Why cure a man of his disease if he is never permitted during the rest of his life, to leave the prison of public abhorrence because of ignorance?" Let the clinician find a therapeutic agent. Let the bacteriologist culture the organism of leprosy. Let the investigator and field worker study leprosy in its environment. Let the welfare officer relieve the overburdened psychology and repair the damaged bodies and souls of the patient and restore him to something like a working life. But let each worker, whatever his particular field, be an energetic champion of the truth — the truth about leprosy which alone can release millions of patients from the age-old tyranny of ignorance, fear and prejudice. For leprosy speaks to us with an ancestral voice demanding from the enlightened today the redress of ancient wrongs.

Kasturba Leprosy Work Centre,
Kandachipuram
13-4-'47 T. N. JAGADISAN

## A PROHIBITION ANTHOLOGY

[ *Continued from Vol. X, No. 43, Page 427* )

( The author of 19 is the famous discoverer of vitamins, Sir Gowland Hopkins, O. M., ex-President of the Royal Society, Professor of Bio-chemistry, University of Cambridge. I take it from *Alcohol-drinking* by Dr. R. F. Rattray ( Cambridge United Temperance Council ). — V. G. D. ]

19

"Alcohol is not a food. The argument that it has any food value at all is due to the fact that it is oxidized in the body. But citric and tartaric acids are also oxidized in the body, yet nobody would suggest that they are foods. The fact is that the oxidization of alcohol in the body is the result of the body's attempt to get rid of a poison. Alcohol is not a food capable of affording protection from the effects of cold .... One often meets with the implication that .... alcoholic beverages have a nutritional value apart from that supposed to belong to the alcohol they contain. Whisky and other spirits, of course, have none. The lighter wines contain mere traces of sugar, together with very small amounts of gum and glycerine, of negligible nutritive value. In order to obtain, at most, half an ounce of sugar, an intoxicating amount of most wines is required. Coming now to beer, I have, to say the truth, hardly patience to deal with the often suggested and sometimes vaunted nutritional value of that beverage. The claim, when not wholly insincere, is ridiculous. A pint of beer mostly sold today contains some carbohydrate material with a food value equal only to that of about one ounce of bread, but even this material is so much altered by fermentation that we do not know whether it has real value as food. In any case, the cost of an ounce of bread is a very small fraction of a penny, while that of a pint of beer is anything from five pence to eight pence. It is unfair, and even cruel that propaganda, subtle, suggestive and intensive, should endeavour to persuade the worker that his beer makes him more robust and increases the power of his muscles: thus tempting him to increased consumption and helping to salve his conscience when he knows that his expenditure is beyond his means." ( *National Temperance Quarterly*)

SIR GOWLAND HOPKINS

## REDDIAR MINISTRY AND KHADI

A recent press report from Madras states that the Reddiar Ministry has set apart certain funds for the improvement of the *charkha*. To be frank, this announcement is not at all encouraging. Whatever may have been the other drawbacks of the Prakasam Ministry, it had certainly given a very bold lead to the country in regard to the Gandhian type of economic planning. There may also have been a few gaps in the details of Mr. Prakasam's textile policy. But he sincerely believed in the potentialities of *khadi* and in the type of socio-economic organization which *khadi* symbolizes. The whole capitalist-controlled press stormed his textile policy continuously, but he stood firm like a rock. I am not concerned with the political aspect of the Madras ministerial crisis. Let me hope that the Prakasam Ministry was not overthrown on account of the textile policy, although several friends from the South inform me that it was Mr. Prakasam's *khadi* scheme which led to the political dust storm. Be that as it may, we expect that Mr. Reddiar will not betray *khadi* under the pressure of vested interests. The days of setting apart funds and announcing rewards for the improvement of the *charkha* are gone. If the Reddiar Ministry really believes in *khadi* and decentralized economic development, it should pursue a bold policy of rural industrialization. If, on the other hand, the new Ministry has no faith in Gandhian Economy, it should not waste a single pie on the *charkha*. The policy of paying lip-service to *khadi* to please Gandhiji really amounts to public dishonesty.

It has also been extremely painful to find that the attitude of the Interim Government has been most unhelpful in this connection. A few months back Gandhiji had strongly advised the Provincial Ministries to refuse the quota of spindles allotted to them by the Central Government. But the Interim Government announced that the Madras Government had no right to cancel the quota allotted to the Province. Whatever may be the constitutional difficulties involved in this question, the type of bureaucratic replies given by the Interim Government on the Madras textile policy were indeed very surprising and even shocking. The Congress can no longer follow a policy of 'drift' in regard to National Planning. It must announce a definite policy about India's economic development. The Provincial Congress Ministries should be given a clear-cut programme by the Congress Working Committee; each Province should not be left free to follow the ideas and 'whims' of individual Ministers in charge of Industrial Development.

Let me repeat that Gandhiji is not against all large-scale industries; he desires that the heavy or key industries should be nationalized. The consumers' goods industries should be decentralized on the widest scale. In place of mass production of the Western variety, there should be production by the masses in millions of cottage factories amid healthy surroundings. I need not go into the details here. The inquisitive reader can refer to my brochure on *The Gandhian Plan of Economic Development*. I would only fervently appeal to the national leaders once again to give a fair trial to the Gandhian Economy before finalizing schemes of economic development. I have no manner of doubt that nationalization of key industries and decentralization of most of the consumers' goods industries alone will be able to remedy the numerous economic ills that plague the modern world.

S. N. AGARWAL

## A NOBLE LEAD

In a big jungle of date palms covering an area of about 6 sq. miles in Morvi State, the All India Village Industries Association has been carrying on some demonstration work in preparing *gur* from palm juice. The production of sugar from palm juice releases fertile land for the cultivation of other primary needs, specially cereals. Our experiments have been successful to the extent of convincing the Maharaja Saheb of Morvi of this programme of producing wealth out of waste lands. Now comes the news that the Maharaja Saheb has launched out on a programme of growing date palm trees in his State and he has inaugurated the scheme by planting palm trees himself. We congratulate the Maharaja Saheb on his venture and we hope that many more will follow the noble lead given by him.

We understand that the Maharaja Saheb is very keen to make every village self-sufficient in respect of jaggery and sugar by utilizing date palm juice. Apart from the fact that these palms supply energy-producing nutrition from waste lands, the palm tree itself supplies various other by-products which meet the other needs of the villages. It supplies timber, fibrous matter, leaves for mat-making, coir-making materials and other various useful articles can be made out of materials obtained from this tree. Hence, we are glad that a beginning has been made at least in a corner of India whereby the people are being taught to help themselves by being self-sufficient in their primary needs.

We may here mention that in one other direction also the Maharaja has been giving the lead and that is in cattle-breeding. India has been running short of good milk-yielding varieties and even her draft cattle have been steadily deteriorating owing to neglect of selective cattle-breeding. Hence, to revive rural life it is necessary to start well-laid out cattle-breeding farms all over the country. Such a progress is beyond the capacity of the ordinary citizen both because of the amount of capital involved and the time element needed. Hence we trust that other men of wealth and influence will also take to this noble occupation and hobby which will bring in health and well-being to the people of our land.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

CONTENTS


| | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| GANDHIJI'S BIHAR TOUR DIARY | | 133 |
| STORY HOUR | ... V. G. D. | 135 |
| INCREASING PRODUCTION | ... J. C. KUMARAPPA | 136 |
| JETTISONING OF THE BALLAST | J. C. KUMARAPPA | 137 |
| ONE WORLD, ONE PROBLEM | ... T. N. JAGADISAN | 138 |
| A PROHIBITION ANTHOLOGY | V. G. D. | 139 |
| REDDIAR MINISTRY AND KHADI | ... S. N. AGARWAL | 140 |
| A NOBLE LEAD | ... J. C. KUMARAPPA | 140 |


Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad.
Subscription Rates — INLAND : One year, Rs. 6: Six months, Rs. 3: FOREIGN : One year, Rs. 8 or 14 sh. or. $ 3.